

DORRANCE'S BUSY BIRTHDAY.

A birthday without mamma. Dorrance could hardly believe the dreadful news. It had been bad enough to think of having papa away; but mamma. To be sure, Dorrance was very sorry for dear Aunt Alice, just home from over the sea and lying ill in New York among strangers, and there wasn't anybody, but mamma to go and bring her home; but oh, dear, a birthday all alone! Jenny, the cook, and Bida, the maid, didn't seem to count just now. Dorrance cried a little, but not even his tears or a big snow storm, which set in during the night, could keep mamma from going to New York.

Tom drove up to take mamma to the station, just as Dorrance came down to breakfast. The sight of the driving storm had given him a very doleful face, for there would be no outdoor fun for him unless it cleared. It did seem as if his birthday were bound to be dismal, indeed. His lip quivered when mamma kissed him good-bye, and he would have cried again, only she called him her "big brave boy," and, of course, he mustn't after that. He had forgotten about birthday presents, and was so surprised to find by his plate a tiny note. It said:

"After breakfast look in the library for a white package marked, 'Dorrance.'"

"YOUR LOVING MAMMA."

It was delightful to have it to wonder about, while he was eating his wheat and cream. How nice of mamma to leave his presents in this way, instead of just handing it to him. But when he went to look, he couldn't see any white package. He hunted behind books and among the couch cushions, but he was not finding what he should have to give it up, when he spied something white right under the easy chair in the corner. Yes, that was it—a beautiful book full of stories and pictures. Dorrance looked it through many times, read a few of the stories, and was just about to close it, when he should do next, when Bida came in, and handed him a slip of paper. He read:

"If you will go up into your room, you will find a pink package for you." How he bounded up the stairs; and then what a search he had for something pink; besides the pink cushion on his dresser.

At last he found it, away in a back corner of his table-drawer—a box of colored crayons! Just what he had been longing for. These kept him busy for an hour or so, and then Bida appeared with another note.

"Oh, what can it be this time?" he exclaimed. The fun was growing interesting.

"Hunt through the halls until you discover a wooden box."

That was the message he read. With a shout, he dashed off, while Bida watched him, smiling to herself at his excitement.

Upstairs and down behind doors and in window corners, until, oh joy! There, right by the laundry was the prettiest tool chest he had ever seen. Jenny brought some bits of boards, and Dorrance sawed and planed and hammered until luncheon time. And then the little lad found more gifts, a pretty orange spoon from Bida, and a beautiful cart that Jenny had made for him with his name in pink letters on top.

As he left the dining-room he was met by another note, that told him to search in the parlor for a long package. He found it to be a dear little violin! Oh, what sweet discords he made for an hour or two afterward. He almost thought this present the very best of all, till he had to stop playing to hunt in his own room for a real silver watch. The search for the watch was not dreamed of. And then it was time for mamma and Aunt Alice to come. He sat by the front window, counting the minutes on his watch, when at last the carriage came in sight. When, with one hand in Aunt Alice's and the other in mamma's, they came into the house, Dorrance said:

"I wasn't lonesome a mite. My presents wouldn't let me be. They kept me so awful busy."

NANNIE L. BRISTOW,
Locust Hill P. O., Va.

STORY OF PRINCESS CHARLOTTE

What do you know about Mecklenburg Stritz, a grand duchy of the German Empire?

That the Baltic Sea rolls behind these two larger and several smaller districts, and the bright waters of the Elbe River flash and quiver just beside them, and that the house of Mecklenburg is the oldest reigning family in Europe.

All very good, little bright eyes; very good indeed. But I know a pretty story about the Duchy Stritz. Do you want to hear it?

Well, it isn't any secret so I may as well tell it to you.

Years and years ago, as story-tellers say, Princess Charlotte was born in Stritz. Now, although a princess, she had set her daily tasks and learned to read and write and spell, and I have been told to mend her own stockings, too. She had a wonderfully sweet voice, and so she was her singing that even Haydn praised her, but this did not make her proud nor vain of that good gift the good Father had given her.

The horrors of war the young princess thought dreadful, and her wise little brain pondered its wickedness so long that one day she set herself to write a letter to a noble prince. She wrote it beautifully, using great care to write it good and dainty every "I" and crossing all of her "I's," for she had been taught to do well her task, whatever it might be.

Some time after that this princess and others were chatting gaily in their happy girlish talk. Some one asked merrily, "Who do you think you shall marry, and the princess laughed, "Guess whoever'll take a little princess as I am." The English maid came in just then, and there was a letter for the little maiden. But you never will guess who wrote it. It was George the Third of England. You have all heard of him.

What did he wish? A queen to share his crown and splendor, and to help make her his care? That, he thought, pleased "peace is so great a blessing," won for her a crown and kingdom.

You have read how long and wisely Queen Charlotte reigned. None bore her malice.

NELLIE WORTHY,
Williamsburg, Va.

THE FOX AND THE CROW.

A crow stole a piece of cheese and flew with it to a tall tree. A fox, seeing her and wishing to get the cheese for himself, tried to obtain it by flattery.

"What a beautiful bird you are! What glossy features you have!" he exclaimed. "If your voice were only equal to your beauty, you would surely be called the Queen of Birds!"

The crow, highly pleased, opened her mouth to caw, when down dropped the cheese. The fox quickly picked it up and ran off.

MAGGIE STEINBACK,
Stall No. 73, Second Market, City.

POEMS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW

Whatever your occupation may be, and however crowded your hours with affairs, do not fail to secure at least a few minutes every day for refreshment of your inner life with a bit of poetry.—Professor Charles Eliot Norton.

No. 363.

The Land Where Our Dreams Come True.

By EDWARD EVERETT SHAW.

The writer of this poem was a student at Brown University, from which institution he graduated with honor in the 20s. He is still alive.

"**F**AR away over a mist-hidden river,
And under a wonderful sky;
Where the rain never blots out the sunshine,
And our loves never weary or dip;
Where the flowers never fade; but in changing,
Their magical sweetness renew,
Lies a glorified realm of enchantment;
The land where our dreams come true.

"By mystical symbols and tokens
We know of that wonderful land;
But alas! on the threshold of manhood
The frail clue slipped out of our hand,
And the wild river, rushes between us,
The white gates are hidden from view,
And only in sleep we remember
The land where our dreams come true.

"We shall find the lost treasures we sought for,
Revealed in that wonderful sphere;
All the aims and the dreams of the by-gone;
All the good that eluded us here;
The innocent faith of our childhood,
The one flawless friendship we knew,
Arrayed in their vanished illusions,
In the land where our dreams come true.

"We know in divinest fulfillment,
Our vain hopes are gathered at Home,
The treasures we sought here are hoarded
Where the moth and the rust cannot come;
And oft when the sunset is fairest,
We catch through a rift in the blue,
A far-away glimpse of the glories
Of the land where our dreams come true.

"There are garnered the prayers of our mothers,
And the soft cradle-songs that they sung;
There they move in the midst in white garments,
And faces immortally young;
And out from the mists of that river
Their sweet hands shall reach us the clue
That leads through the Valley of Shadow
To the land where our dreams come true.

"So weeping, we lay down our idols,
And bury our loves out of sight;
Though we know in our hearts we shall find them
By and by in the Mansions of Light;
And the salt tears that fall on their ashes,
And blossom in pansy and rue,
Over there shall be lilies immortal,
In the land where our dreams come true."

This series began in The Times-Dispatch, Sunday, October 11, 1903. One is published each day.

AN ESKIMO'S STORY.

I live far up in Canada with my father, mother, and little sister. I live in a tent made of skins in the summer, and in a house made of stones and snow in the winter. I have to travel through a passage ten feet long to get into our winter house. There is a platform at one end of our house on which we sit and sleep. We have only one window, and that has a thin seal-skin curtain over it. There is a slab of carved stone in our house that we use to melt snow for drinking water.

I guess some people think that we Eskimos never have any fun, but they are mistaken. I play hockey with a stick and ball made of walrus bone. I can catch birds in my bird net; drive the dog team to the sleds, and I have a sled of my own made entirely of bone tied together with seal-skin cord, and the runners are shed of bone and dressed in fur. We do not have any wood, except when a piece of driftwood happens to float by. We burn walrus

fat, dried moss, and dried willow blooms. We light our fires by striking a piece of steel against a stone.

We have no vegetables, but sometimes we find a few berries. We have bird stew, seal meat, walrus meat, bear meat, and best of all, bird's eggs.

My father is the best hunter around here, and I mean to be just like him when I get older. I can crack a short-handled long lashed whip as well as he can now, and I am learning how to do many other things.

One day, when we were far out on the snow, my father showed me how to find water to drink. He took a seal-skin cup, and when we reached the top of a hummock, he struck the ice with his whip staff. It sounded solid, so we went on to the next hummock. That sounded the same way, but when we struck the third, it sounded hollow. Father broke the ice and we found clear running water. We dipped some up in our cup and drank it.

My father has a bone harpoon with a skin cord to it. Mother has a bone needle with which she makes us bird skin under clothes. We wear them with the feathers

next to our bodies. We have bear skin pants, boots, and coats with hoods attached. We pull the hoods up over our heads and wear fur mittens. These keep us warm in the long, cold winter.

ELLIE RIVERS,
Gun's Hill, Va.

POOR JACK.

He stood looking into the window of the corner bakery, only a poor, ragged boy with his face unshaven and rough, coarse hair falling over it. You would have wondered how such a dirty boy could bear to be out in the street.

But, oh! how hungry he was, he had had only one poor, dry crust of bread all yesterday, that he had picked out of a barrel. Didn't he wish some one would let him chop a little wood or do a little work, if they would only give him a loaf of bread in return. For his two little sisters were so hungry, he guessed they would die, unless the mission people came to help them. How he loved them, too! Mother said that God would help them. But God didn't seem to hear. The big tears gathered in his eyes, but he wouldn't let them fall.

If he could only take a loaf back to Susy and Jennie. Just then a little girl came tripping by holding her mother's hand. She had ten cents in her pocket, ten whole cents to spend for herself as she liked. She had been thinking what to buy, candy or peanuts, or a new head

"Oh! see, mamma!" she said, softly, "Isn't he dirty? and what does he want?" "Bread, I guess, Nelly. He looks hungry."

"But why don't he go home and get some?" "Don't you s'pose his mother would give it to him?"

"Ask him, dearie?" "Little boy," said Nelly, "big boy, I mean, do you want something? I saw you cry, two tears. Did your mamma whip you? Why don't you go home to dinner?"

"There isn't any dinner, and mother's dead," he said.

"Oh! dear!" sighed Nelly, grieved to the heart at the thought of such misery. "Do you s'pose," she said, "if you had ten cents, that would help?"

They took him into a bakery, and you couldn't begin to guess how much it bought—two loaves of bread, a nice cake, and a quart of good, rich milk and a pail to carry it in. At least Nelly thought she paid for these, herself. Then they went home with poor Jack, and made friends with his sisters, and Nelly begged that they might go home with her and be her sisters. "If they only will wash their faces," she whispered, "for the dirt mightn't come off, you know."

There were no more hungry times after that, for a kind gentleman gave Jack work, and his sisters were well fed and clothed. Jack said after all that God must have heard him, and sent Nelly to answer.

Selected by GRACIE MURRAY.

BROWN-EYED BOYS.

The brown-eyed boys are the baddest boys. They pull your curls and break your toys.

We have discovered, Sue and I, Sure and certain the reason why.

We think that all the good boys in the town Have got blue eyes and all the rest are brown.

Because there's my brother, he pulls my hair, And sometimes pushes me out of my chair.

And he laughs at me when I want to cry— He has big brown eyes, and I know that's why.

And there's Joe Green; he teases Sue, And he never will play—he snaps her, too.

And it makes him mad for Sue to tell, And then he calls her cry-baby belle; I am awful sorry and so is Sue, And we wish and wish that their eyes were blue.

Written by NELLIE WORTHY,
Williamsburg, Va.

THE FAIRY LIFE.

Come into these yellow sands And then take hands; Courtless when you have and kissed The willow waves whist;

Foot it fleetly here and there, And sweet sprites, the burden bear.

Hark, hark! "How-wow," The watch-dog's bark;

Hark, hark! I hear The strain of strutting chanticleer Cry, "Cock-a-diddle-oo!"

RUTH FARROW,
820 North Fourth Street, Richmond.

LITTLE GLADYS'S CHRISTMAS

Louise was in the nursery talking to her little friends, Alice, Marvin and Gladys Schauf, when her mother called her and said, "Will you go to the store for me, Louise, and give this note to Mr. Brainer?"

"Yes, mother, I will ask my friends to excuse me a few minutes," So Louise went to the nursery and asked them to excuse her about ten minutes and they said "Certainly we will."

The door opened and a gust of wind came in the hall. "Well, I hope I didn't stay long, did I?" asked Louise.

"Oh, no, you never stayed five minutes, hardly. Well, let's talk about something else," said Alice.

"What are you going to get Christmas?" asked Louise of Alice.

"I want a doll and carriage, stove, a little folding bed for my doll, nice table and tea set and a little trunk," said Alice.

"And you," said Louise to Gladys, "I don't expect to get a thing for me, are so poor that we have not a cent to buy anything to eat, much less toys," added Gladys with tears in her eyes.

"I don't know what I want Santa Claus to bring me, but I know what I am going to do," said Louise.

"Oh please tell us," pleaded Gladys. "I can't, it is a good secret and I will see mother about it today," replied she. "The clock is striking three and I must go," said Gladys.

As soon as they were gone Louise ran to her mother and told her mother what Gladys had said, and so Mrs. Stone, Louise's mother, said, "Alright, dear, we will fix things alright for Mrs. Schauf and her two children, so they began planning what they would get for the children and Mrs. Schauf. It was now Christmas eve, and so Louise and her mother and father went to the store and let me tell you what they got. For the children, they got four dolls, two beds for their dolls, chairs, tea sets, tables, two nice little stoves about a foot high, and for the clothes, they got two pairs of shoes, four pairs of stockings, two nice thick warm coats, two pretty hats and gloves also. They got for Mrs. Schauf a nice winter suit and hat, nice pair of shoes and many other things, and here comes the best of all, a nice turkey, pork, ham, bread, pies, cakes, jellies, candy, cranberries, bananas, apples and for the parlor, they bought a nice carpet and parlor furniture and had a Christmas tree sent there by Santa when they were asleep and a ton of coal and a load of wood. On their Xmas tree Mrs. Stone had a little jule with a hundred dollars in it. In the midst of all these things was a card, saying, "Wishing you many happy returns, from Santa Claus."

In the morning, when Gladys and her little sister Elizabeth got up, oh how happy they were. They dressed and looked at their things and wondered how and what a nice time they would have. Mrs. Schauf was so overcome with joy that she could hardly believe her eyes.

Gladys went to see Louise that day and told her of what had happened and Louise said, "I am glad Santa thought so much of you this year."

When Mrs. Stone put Louise to bed that night she declared she had never been so happy in her life and her mother told her it was because she had made some one else happy.

Selected by ALTHEA C. EGGLESTON,
414 N. Twenty-seventh Street, City.

P. S.—Please send me a badge.

HELEN'S CHRISTMAS TREE

It was Christmas and Helen was up early. She was expecting her cousins, so she got up and dressed herself in a very pretty frock and went down to her breakfast.

She had just finished when the door bell rang. She ran to the door and it was her cousins, Mary, Nellie and Ruby, who came to spend the day. Helen carried them into the back parlor, and showed them her toys. There were dolls, dolls' furniture, tea sets, games, books and many other things. They played some games and then it was time for dinner. After dinner many of her friends came and the folding doors were thrown open, leading into the front parlor and there stood the loveliest Christmas tree you ever saw.

The children were very happy and clapped their hands for joy. In the evening they played games and afterwards sat down to table filled with candy, nuts, fruit, cakes and lots of nice things. Then after they had finished, the candles on the tree were lit and it was very pretty. After staying a little longer the tree was stripped and the presents distributed.

The little guests bid good-bye to their host, and left for their homes, having spent a very enjoyable evening. Helen's cousins stayed for a month. That night as Helen's mother kissed her good-night, she said:

"I have had the best time I ever had

=GROCERIES=

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Large Mackerels, each.....5c Large can New Orleans Syrup.....12c

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and hope to have another tree next Christmas."

MARIE NOTT,
Barton Heights, Va.

THE MUDDY BAPTIZING.

Two of papa's little cousins were talking about baptizing, when the boy suddenly jumped up and told the little girl to come on and he would baptize her.

She was very anxious to go, at once they ran and got their hats. They walked down the road about a mile and were passing a deep mud hole, when the little girl felt her brother pushing her in. She screamed and caught her brother, but he held her in the mud until she was muddled. He had to carry her back and their mother met them at the door and asked them where had they been. They told her and she said:

"Come on and I will baptize you all sure enough."

They have never tried to baptize each other again.

SALLIE M. JEFFRIES,
Botha, Fauquier Co., Va.

THE VALENTINE.

'Twas on a wintry evening,
The weather it was fine,
When I asked my little lady,
To be my valentine.

You think she was a lady
Of nine or ten or so;
But, ah! you are mistaken;
She's just my age, you know.

We were standing on the doop-step
And her answer I could guess,
And as a cloud passed o'er the moon,
She softly answered, "Yes."

Then home I went in triumph—
I never felt so fine;
Because my little lady
Was now my valentine.

Written for The Times-Dispatch by
LILA GERTRUDE WOODY,
Colleton, Va.

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